

Message Text

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 0719

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJECT: THE CURRENT STATE OF ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: IN JANUARY 28 MEETING WITH POLCOUNS, JAPANESE EMBASSY POLCOUNS SAID HE THOUGHT JAPANESE PRESS TREATMENT OF ROK WAS BECOMING MORE BALANCED, THAT KCIA, SPEAKING FOR ROKG, HAD REJECTED JSP VISIT TO KOREA UNLESS HUMAN RIGHTS FOCUS WAS ABANDONED, THAT LOW KEY ROK-JAPAN MILITARY INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE CONTINUES, THAT MITI GOING CAUTIOUS CONSIDERATION SOME MINOR INVOLVEMENT ROK DEFENSE INDUSTRY, AND THAT PROPOSAL FOR ROK-JAPAN COMMON MARKET SURFACED IN RECENT SPEECH BY JAPANESE AMBASSADOR WAS LARGELY A RHETORICAL FLOURISH REFLECTING ANTICIPATED CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN ROK-JAPAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH POLCOUNS JANUARY 28 JAPANESE EMBASSY POLCOUNS KONDO AND DEFENSE ATTACHE HISAMATSU PROVIDED TOUR D' HORIZON OF ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS. ACCORDING TO KONDO CURRENT STATE OF RELATIONSHIP IS SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED OVER THIS TIME LAST YEAR. FACTORS MAKING FOR IMPROVEMENT INCLUDE DECLINE OF INTEREST IN JAPAN IN
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KIM TAE CHUNG CASE AND DECLINING JAPANESE PRESS ALARM

OVER AREAS OF POSSIBLE MILITARY CONFLICT NOW THAT SENSATIONAL NEWS STORIES FROM VIET NAM WAR SCENE NO LONGER DOMINATE FOREIGN NEWS. KONDO THOUGHT PENDULUM OF ALL-OUT JAPANESE PRESS HOSTILITY TOWARD ROK WAS SWINGING BACK IN THE DIRECTION OF MORE BALANCED TREATMENT OF KOREAN ISSUE. HE CITED JANUARY YOMIURI INTERVIEW WITH ROK PRESIDENT PAK CHONG-HUI, A COPY OF WHICH HE WAS CARRYING WITH HIM, AS EVIDENCE. KONDO SAID YOMIURI POLITICAL EDITOR WAS WELL KNOWN FOR HIS RADICAL ANTI ROK INCLINATIONS, YET TREATMENT OF ROK IN YOMIURI HEADLINE PIECE WAS QUITE FAVORABLE, AVOIDING, FOR EXAMPLE, CRITICISM OF ROK INTERNAL SITUATION. KONDO NOTED TENDENCY OF JAPANESE NEWSPAPERS TO MOVE IN TANDEM ON PUBLIC ISSUES AND GUARDEDLY SPECULATED THAT MAINICHI FEATURING TWO MONTHS AGO OF BACK-TO-BACK INTERVIEWS WITH PAK CHONG-HUI AND KIM IL-SONG MIGHT HAVE SET TREND IN MOTION TOWARD MORE BALANCED JAPANESE PRESS TREATMENT OF KOREAN ISSUE. (COMMENT: KONDO IS AN ACTIVIST IN PROMOTING IMPROVED ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS, AND HIS ASSESSMENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN THIS LIGHT.)

2. JSP VISIT

KONDO SAID HE HAD TALKED TO THREE DIFFERENT OFFICIALS IN THE KCIA RECENTLY ABOUT THE PROPOSED JSP VISIT TO KOREA, AND THAT THEY HAD DEFINITELY REJECTED THE VISIT UNLESS THE PUBLIC TERMS OF REFERENCE WERE CHANGED TO EXCLUDE THE CONNOTATION OF AN INVESTIGATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN KOREA. ADDITIONALLY KONDO SAID THE KCIA IS ADAMANT THAT THE JSP DELEGATION VISIT CANNOT BE SPONSORED BY KOREA'S TINY SOCIALIST UNIFICATION PARTY AND THE DELEGATION CANNOT SEE SOCIALIST UNIFICATION PARTY LEADER KIM CHOL AND DEMOCRATIC UNIFICATION PARTY LEADER YANG IL-TONG. KONDO SAID HE ARGUED TO NO AVAIL WITH KCIA THAT CHANGING THE PUBLIC RATIONALE WOULD NOT APPRECIABLY ALTER THE OUTCOME OF THE VISIT. THE KCIA OFFICIALS DID NOT GIVE ANY SPECIFIC REASON FOR THEIR INSISTANCE ON THESE CONDITIONS. KONDO SAID KCIA AGENTS IN TOKYO WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH THE JSP AND INFORM THEM OF THE CONDITIONS. HE THOUGHT THAT BECAUSE OF THE JSP DESIRE TO IMPROVE ITS IMAGE AS A PARTY FULLY ACQUAINTED WITH MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES IN PREPARATION FOR THE EXPECTED LDP

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LOSS OF CONTROL OF THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE DIET IN THE NEXT ELECTION, THE PARTY WOULD ACCEPT IN SOME FORM THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE KCIA.

3. SECURITY QUESTIONS:

HISAMATSU SAID JAPANESE AND ROKS CONTINUE TO EXCHANGE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION ON MILITARY SUBJECTS THROUGH PERIODIC VISITS,

SUCH AS VISIT TO KOREA OF JAPANESE CHIEF OF GROUND FORCES LAST OCTOBER. HE SAID THE NEXT SUCH VISIT WOULD PROBABLY BE BY ROK ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF YI SI-HO, WHO EXPECTS TO GO TO THE U.S. IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND WILL STOP IN JAPAN ON THE WAY BACK TO KOREA. THE EXCHANGES HAVE PRIMARILY INVOLVED PROVISION BY THE ROK OF ORDER OF BATTLE TYPE INFORMATION ON NORTH KOREAN FORCES AND PROVISION BY THE JAPANESE OF INFORMATION THEY HAVE ON CHINESE AND SOVIET FORCES. THE JAPANESE USUALLY LEARN MORE THAN THE ROKS DO IN THESE EXCHANGES, SAID KONDO, WHO ADDED THAT ANYTHING THAT GIVES THE APPEARANCE OF ROK-JAPAN MILITARY COOPERATION IS VERY SENSITIVE POLITICALLY IN JAPAN AND THAT THEREFORE PROGRESS IN THIS AREA IS LIKELY TO BE SLOW.

4. KONDO ALSO SAID MITI MINISTER KOMOTO HAS LAID DOWN STRICT INSTRUCTIONS THAT GOJ NOT GET INVOLVED IN MILITARY-RELATED BUSINESS VENTURES INVOLVING THE ROK WHICH MIGHT CAUSE POLITICAL REPURCUSSIONS IN JAPAN. IN EFFECT THIS RULED OUT CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN ROK DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, (AN UNLIKELY PROSPECT IN ANY EVENT IN VIEW OF PRESENT GENERAL UNAVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR OVERSEAS INVESTMENT), BUT LEFT OPEN TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE AND SALE OF EQUIPMENT WHICH MIGHT BE ON THE CIVIL-MILITARY BORDERLINE. HISAMATSU AND KONDO BOTH GUARDEDLY ADMITTED THAT MITI WAS CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF MANUFACTURING SUCH THINGS AS TRUCK AND AIRCRAFT COMPONENTS BUILT TO MILITARY SPECIFICATIONS, BUT WHICH ALSO HAD CIVILIAN USES. IN THIS CONNECTION KONDO EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN ROK FORCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS WHICH POLCOUNS DISCUSSED IN VERY GENERAL TERMS. KONDO SAID THE IMPETUS IN THIS AREA WAS FROM JAPANESE BUSINESS RATHER THAN FROM THE GOJ. BOTH MEN APPROACHED WHOLE AREA OF PETENTIAL ROK-JAPANESE SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS IN A VERY GUARDED FASHION.

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5. COMMON MARKET

IN A RECENT SPEECH, JAPANESE AMBASSADOR NISHIYAMA CALLED FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A QTE COMMON MARKET UNQTE BETWEEN JAPAN AND KOREA. KONDO SAID THIS WAS A VARIATION OF AN IDEA WHICH HAD ORIGINATED WITH A PROFESSOR AT HITOTSUBASHI UNIVERSITY IN JAPAN FOR A JAPAN-ROK-TAIWAN-HONG KONG COMMON MARKET. HE SAID THE SPEECH WAS DRAFTED BY A MITI OFFICIAL WHO WAS VISITING SEOUL AND IMPLIED THAT IT WAS NOT REALLY A MEANINGFUL PROPOSAL BY POINTING OUT THAT IT WOULD EXACERBATE EXISTING TRADE IMBALANCE IN JAPANESE FAVOR. MORE BENEFICIAL, HE SAID, WOULD BE A COMMON LABOR MARKET, BUT THIS OPTION WAS SEVERELY CONSTRAINED BY THE HOMOGENEITY OF THE JAPANESE POPULATION AND THE SOCIAL RESISTANCE IN JAPAN TO THE INTRODUCTION OF OUTSIDERS. HE

CITED CURRENT RESISTANCE OF OKINAWAN LABOR UNIONS TO KOREAN
PINEAPPLE PICKERS IN OKINAWA.
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